



Rimstone News

Official correspondence of Rimstone Cooperative Ltd

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Rimstone Cooperative Ltd.
Rimstone Cooperative Ltd.
A Community Advancement Society

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Editorial

The team have managed to pull together a quick update of the things that have been happening lately, and of interest to members. Enjoy...

Rob Brain, Newsletter editor

Send feedback to: directors@rimstone.org.au.

Rimstone Co-op Happenings

COVID-19 has made things difficult for Rimstone. For a couple of years now, it has prevented normal access to Buchan and disrupted the planning of maintenance and normal working bees plus the continuity of projects in and around Homeleigh and our cave properties.

Staying at Homeleigh – Being a registered accommodation business, Rimstone Co-operative is required to have instituted COVID procedures and enforce compliance with the requirements. These are included as the last page in this newsletter.

Members and guests at Homeleigh should have up-to-date vaccination against the COVID19 virus. This vaccination requirement is to prevent cross-infection between members and their guests.

Shades of Death property – The Shades property maintenance has continued with several working bees. See below about celebrating Geoff Rebbechi's development of the cave.

Nigel Cooke is re-surveying Shades of Death Cave, and building on the Van Dyk survey.

Scrubby Creek property – This property has now been totally refenced. Doug Reidy together with BlazeAid volunteers constructed the fences. We used insurance, grants and a contribution from DWELP towards materials for this.

We obtained an East Gippsland Catchment Manage Authority, Biodiversity Bushfire Recovery Grant for some of the Scrubby Creek frontage fencing. This grant also included provision for shade trees for the tufa, track making to the cave and tufa as well as a water trough for stock. Only the fencing has been done. This conservation

Homeleigh March Working Bee

Your assistance is desperately needed, whether skilled or un-skilled, your help will be very useful.

Please reserve this date and book your accommodation asap:

Weekend of 5-6 March 2022

Tasks include: demolition, internal painting, interior refurbishment of Room 8, and...

More details on page 3 .../

fencing protecting the creek as well as the steep grassy slopes with a number of scarce grassland plants such as Kangaroo Grass and Australian Sorghum. The fencing of the creek boundary was necessary to prevent stock wandering into the burnt forest. Roy Furness has recently started the track construction but there are other necessary projects.

Homeleigh – At Homeleigh, the Internal Toilet and Shower project has been interrupted by COVID. Gary Coleman and his builder mate Geoff hope to complete this soon. See below about the Working Bee to restart the Bedroom Project starting with Room 8.

Homeleigh quick working bee – Some of the younger (and some new) members have initiated a painting job of the outside of Homeleigh – great job! See more details and photos on page 3.

Cave studies – Tim Featonby is studying with John Webb and is doing the geology of the Scrubby Creek Cave. We hosted Sean Bay and Rachael Lappan from Monash University who are studying the microbiology of caves, particularly bacteria capable of using sources of energy based on hydrogen or methane rather than oxygen. They sampled from Scrubby Creek Cave and Shades of Death Cave. Initial results are promising.

Nicholas White
Chair and Booking Officer

Vale Geoffrey Brian Rebbechi, 1941–2021
A Fitting Farewell at Shades

A gathering of Geoffrey Rebbechi's friends, cavers, Buchan locals and family gathered at the M3 Shades of Death Cave at Murrindal, Victoria, on Saturday 22nd of January 2022 to celebrate Geoff's life, and to ready his ashes for an eventual release into the flowing M3 cave stream. With a glass of champagne in hand, and as Wagner's *"The Valkyrie"* echoed through the M3 vaults, we all reflected and toasted the successes of Geoff's life.

After the ceremony, all returned to Geoff's long-time Murrindal base, the old Murrindal school house, for a good old BBQ and happy hour or so.

Geoff was a leading Victorian caver from the middle 1950's right through to the late 1990's. During this period Geoff and his cohorts explored, mapped and otherwise documented many caves and karsts throughout Victoria and interstate. Perhaps Geoff's greatest caving contribution was the eventual ownership and project development of M3 Shades of Death Cave as a Tourist cave.

As he aged, Geoff encouraged cavers to continue with the exploration and mapping of Shades. In 2016 Geoff and his family and friends offered the Shades cave for purchase by Rimstone Co-operative. This purchase was completed in 2017, thus keeping a magnificent cave in cavers' ownership.

Thanks Geoffrey.

Daryl Carr

*Celebrating Geoff Rebbechi's life and admiring
the newly laid memorial plaque in M3 cave,
January 2022*



*Geoff Rebbechi's plaque
was installed on 13 November 2021.
L-R: Darren Camp, Jason Dalton,
Shane Price, David Oost, John Oost.*

Welcome to new Rimstone Members

The following new members in recent months are warmly welcomed to our Rimstone Co-operative: Amanda Shave, Bo Muresan, Nadine Muresan, Les Gondoly and Megan Grainger.

March 2022 Working Bee

The upcoming working bee on 5-6 March will tackle:

- Commence the interior refurbishment of Room 8, including the demolition of internal wall lining, installation of insulation, and hanging Gyprock sheets, etc.
- Painting of all internal bedroom doors.
- Various grounds maintenance activities, including: numerous tree branches need pruning to enable safe accessible mowing.

Please make it a high priority to help us out with the serious maintenance of our beloved facility. For this working bee, please book your accommodation in the normal way (by email).

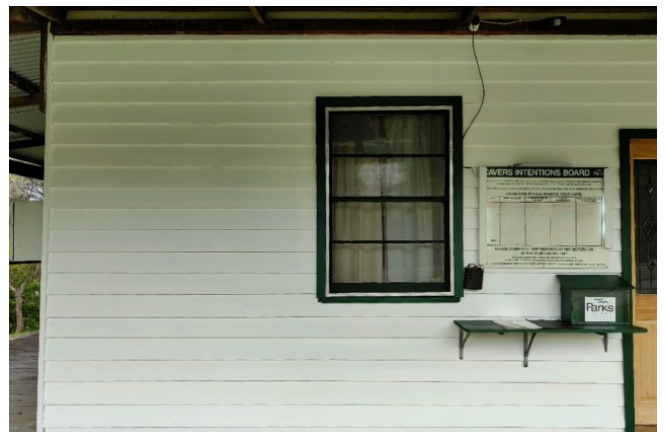
To discuss working bee tasks and opportunities, please contact Paul Brooker by email (paul.brooker4@icloud.com) or phone (0427 482 630).

Homeleigh Outside Painting Project

Outside painting of Homeleigh has started. This project was initiated by Bo and Nadine Muresan and new members Les Gondoly and Megan Grainger, with a number of other members participating.

The project will include the outsides of Homeleigh as well as the new cement sheet weather boards above the verandahs, which had only received an undercoat so far.

They started at the front on 6-7 February, and already the front is very improved. See some of their photos on this page.



M3 Shades Working Bees 2021

In November 2021 the COVID lock down eased! So on with the M3 fencing and yard clean up. The M3 Team were eager to finish the job. We arrived at Homeleigh on the afternoon of Sunday 7th November and were off to M3 by 9am Monday morning.

The weather was overcast and cool with just an occasional light mist. The paddock grass was green and damp – ideal conditions for the burning of dried bush and tree cuttings resulting from quite a few of the previous tidy ups at the M3 yard. But first we checked the CFA and East Gippsland Fire District website for any conditions or current restrictions about burn-offs. All was okay to proceed. We then informed our M3 Property neighbours about our intended burn off and all was okay!

The fencing team started work to finish the East and South fences, and the Firies started the clean-up and burn-offs. However, the East fence line needed a huge effort to clear away the obstinate succulent plant that had over time tangled itself through much of the old fence. Thankfully the burn-off fire was hot enough to consume the wet succulent plant clearings.

After a hard day's work, all back to Homeleigh for a recovery effort. Tuesday was again an ideal day for getting on with the job. So, it continued: fencing; mowing the M3 parking area; whipper snipping the grounds; and clearing and burning the offcuts. Also, some improvements were made to the west end of the M3 entry shed roofing.

Back to Homeleigh for a group evening BBQ with members who were working in Federal Cave and others who were working on tidying up the, in-places, thigh-high jungle that is the Homeleigh lawns. Our whipper snipper operator at Homeleigh said that after a while this job was so tiring, he had to crawl back up the slopes. Wet weather later stopped any further grounds work at Homeleigh.

So, after the BBQ and a classic slide evening of caving trips all over the country we were ready for Wednesday. Heavy rain was forecast for

Wednesday and the next few days, so into it Team!

The fencing was finished, and the grounds cleaned up by the mid-afternoon. This was just in time as the rain at Buchan commenced and did not start easing off until the Saturday.

Buchan was so soaked from past rain Peter Robertson cancelled a site inspection to plan the M-49 carpark to cave entry path. The Slippery Pinch Road near the stock dams was a wet boggy swamp. We decided not to check the Sunny Point Road access as the now flowing gully crossing will be slippery and the track past the crossing would be soft and subject to damage by a vehicle's tracks.

During the lockdown Rex Pilgrim, a country Rimstone member, visited Homeleigh and he replenished the fire wood supply, and made a few repairs to our trailer and push mower. Rex also kept some control over the Homeleigh grounds grass regrowth.

Again, a successful working bee and social gathering. There is still plenty to do up at M3, so stay tuned.

Thanks to the M3 Team: Brian Carter, Tom Whitehouse, Phil Hutcheson and Rex Pilgrim.

Thanks also to the Homeleigh Team: Greg Leeder, Anne Carter, Peter Robertson and Marg Robertson.

Daryl Carr

Booking accommodation at Homeleigh

Please remember that accommodation at Homeleigh is operating under strict COVID-safe conditions (see the COVID Notice on next page).

Please remember to request accommodation using the proper email address so that your request is received promptly. Then our on-duty accommodation officer can reply promptly. (Else your request might get lost.)

Homeleigh Booking Officer
email to: accomm@rimstone.org.au

Rimstone Co-op directors

Nigel Cooke, Gary Coleman, Nicholas White,
Neil Wilson, Peter Stewart.

Contact by email: directors@rimstone.org.au

Rimstone Co-operative Limited & Homeleigh COVID Notice

24 November, 2021

Homeleigh is registered as an Accommodation premises. With the relaxed COVID restrictions. Rimstone's compliance measures require all residents 16 years of age and over to be vaccinated against COVID-19 according to the State government requirements, with a record on either your mobile phone "Service Victoria" app used to register when you arrive at Homeleigh, or in hard copy or photo on your phone. The Rimstone Member in Charge should check your vaccination status. The Member in Charge (or their delegate) becomes the COVID Marshal.

There is now no accommodation limit at Homeleigh. However, the previous limit of 10 was based on the Toilet Block and Kitchen service areas. Just be mindful of not crowding people in these constrained spaces.

COVID requirements at Homeleigh:

1. Upon arrival at Homeleigh each person is to register using the QR Code system (download the Service Victoria app to your smartphone, available for Android and Apple phones). For people without smartphone access, fill in the available registration sheet with phone contact or address information as for (2.) below. The QR Code is displayed at the registration table in the kitchen.
2. The keeping of a **Contact Register** of people staying at Homeleigh with information on their arrival temperature (digital thermometer located in entrance lobby) and any symptoms which could be related to COVID infection (Health Record with Contact Phone No. record sheet).
3. The keeping of a cleaning register of communal area surfaces, door handles and amenity block sinks, etc (Cleaning policy and recording sheet).
4. To change sheets and pillowcases of all beds used.
5. To provide the **Health Record Contact Register** record to the Directors (scan and email to directors@rimstone.org.au)
6. The wearing of masks is determined by discussion and decided by the Member in Charge.

Nicholas White

Chairman, Rimstone Co-operative Ltd.

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